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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [SOCI](#) [KCOR](#) [KCRM](#) [KJUS](#) [AJ](#)
SUBJECT: AZERBAIJAN: KIDNAPPING AND EXTORTION GANG LEADER
HAJI MAMMADOV RECEIVES LIFE SENTENCE

REF: BAKU 06 01124

Classified By: DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION JASON P. HYLAND PER 1.4(B,D)

¶1. (U) In a January 19 verdict, former Chief of the Ministry of Internal Affairs Criminal Investigation Division Haji Mammadov was sentenced to life in prison. Nine members of Mammadov's 26-member murder, kidnapping and extortion gang also received life sentences. One of the accused, the owner of a resort where Mammadov buried several of his victims, was acquitted. The remaining 15 gang members received sentences between two and 15 years. Mammadov and his gang were arrested in March 2005 after the Ministry of National Security raided the hideout where Mammadov had been holding captive the wife of the chairman of the International Bank of Azerbaijan. The gang was charged under 50 articles of the Azerbaijani Criminal Code, including kidnapping and manslaughter.

¶2. (C) Based on our periodic monitoring, this trial - which began July 20, 2006 - appeared to more closely reflect Azerbaijani legal standards than the process normally observed in Azerbaijani judicial proceedings. The local OSCE branch monitored this trial extensively as part of its broader trial-monitoring program, and OSCE representatives told us they will issue a statement next week. We will report any substantive reaction septel.

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